

**ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE**

An apparatus and method are provided for preventing buffers used to reduce delays on long lines of an IC from being damaged due to charge that collects on the buffers during manufacturing. In accordance with the present invention, a protection  
5 diode is included directly in at least each buffer that is used for this purpose, i.e., for the purpose of preventing delays on long lines of the IC. By including a protection diode in at least each buffer that is used for this purpose, the present invention obviates the need for having to use tools during the IC design process to determine a suitable location for a protection diode.

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